



News Release

WISCONSIN ARMY AND AIR NATIONAL GUARD

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Events Sunday in Beloit, Black River Falls

Sendoffs planned for Guard's 1158th Transportation Company

Gov. Jim Doyle will lead senior National Guard officers, public officials and citizens in two sendoff ceremonies Sunday, Oct. 24, for the Wisconsin Army National Guard's 1158th Transportation Company. The unit, headquartered in Tomah with detachments in Beloit and Black River Falls, will be activated Thursday, Oct. 21. The unit's approximately 280 soldiers will spend several days at their hometown armories prior to the Sunday sendoff events. They will then travel to Fort Benning, Ga., for mobilization processing and additional training. The unit is expected to deploy overseas in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

The community sendoff for about 130 soldiers in Beloit will begin at 10:00 a.m. at the Beloit National Guard armory, 2700 Kennedy Drive. It will be followed by a similar event for about 150 Tomah and Black River Falls soldiers at the Black River Falls High School, 1200 Pierce Street, at 1:00 p.m.

This is the second recent mobilization of the 1158th Transportation Company. In March 2003 the unit was ordered to active duty for an expected overseas mission, however half the company was released from active duty after three months at Fort McCoy. The unit's other soldiers performed missions at Fort Knox, Ky., and Fort Irwin, Calif., for up to 12 months before they were released from active duty between December 2003 and March 2004. The new mobilization orders came last month and Guard officials expect the unit will be on active duty for more than one year, with a full 12 months deployed overseas.

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With this second mobilization of the 1158th Transportation Company, about 1,700 members of the Wisconsin Army and Air National Guard will be serving on active duty. Of those, 360 are currently serving overseas with another 1,050 preparing for eventual overseas deployment.

Even though about 50 percent of the Wisconsin Guard's soldiers and airmen have been called to active duty since Sept. 11, 2001, most have completed their missions and more than 8,000 are currently available to provide military support here in Wisconsin, if required.

Sendoff events for the 1158th Transportation Company are:

Beloit — Det. 1, 1158th Transportation Company

Time: Sunday, October 24, 10:00 a.m.

Place: Beloit National Guard armory, 2700 Kennedy Drive, Beloit.

Expected Participants: Gov. Jim Doyle, Maj. Gen. Al Wilkening, Brig. Gen. Kerry Denson, U.S. Rep. Tammy Baldwin, State Sen. Judith Robson, State Rep. Debra Towns, along with other state and local officials.

The Beloit sendoff ceremony will honor about 130 National Guard soldiers mobilizing Oct. 21 and who are expected to deploy overseas for up to one year. Also present will be family members, friends, and community supporters. Music will be provided by members of the Wisconsin National Guard's 132nd Army Band.

Black River Falls — Headquarters and Det. 2, 1158th Transportation Co.

Time: Sunday, October 24, 1:00 p.m.

Place: Black River Falls High School, 1200 Pierce Street, Black River Falls.

Expected Participants: Gov. Jim Doyle, Maj. Gen. Al Wilkening, Brig. Gen. Kerry Denson, U.S. Rep. Ron Kind, State Rep. Terry Musser, along with other state and local officials.

The Black River Falls sendoff ceremony will honor about 150 National Guard soldiers from Tomah and Black River Falls mobilizing Oct. 21 and who are expected to deploy overseas for up to one year. Also present will be family members, friends, and community supporters. Music will be provided by the Wisconsin National Guard's 132nd Army Band.

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EDITORS AND NEWS DIRECTORS: Both sendoff ceremonies are open to the news media. We expect to have about 130 deploying unit members and their families at Beloit and 150 at Black River Falls, in addition to senior military and civilian officials.

The Beloit armory is at 2700 Kennedy Drive, Beloit. The Black River Falls High School is at 1200 Pierce Street, Black River Falls.

Each ceremony is expected to last approximately 30 minutes, with most participants available to the media for approximately 20 minutes afterward. Soldiers and families will also be available, subject to their willingness to be interviewed.

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